

ROCKINGHAM SELECTBOARD REGULAR MEETING  
Tuesday, June 21, 2016

Present: Lamont Barnett, Joshua Hearne, Peter Golec, Ann DiBernardo, Stefan Golec

Also Present: Willis Stearns, II, Municipal Manager; Kerry Bennett, Recording Clerk; Bianca Zaransky, Greater Falls Community Justice Center; Shane Harris, BFPD; Stephanie Ward; Deborah Wright; Bonnie Northup; Gary Fox; Jim Mitchell

Press: Joey Powers, FACT8; Tory Jones Bonenfant, Eagle Times; Maddy Shaw, Brattleboro Reformer

Call to Order: Meeting was called to order at 6:30 p.m. by Chairman Lamont Barnett

Additions to the Agenda for Routine Administrative Matters and/or Pressing Matters that will require ratification at a future meeting:

- Stearns noted that he received the bid from the State for winter salt yesterday and Cargill was the only respondent to the State bid for municipalities. The price will remain the same as last year at \$85.13/ton. There is a 15 day response time from the date of the bid and the next Selectboard meeting will be too late. Stearns noted there are 2 options – Option 1 is the State price with potential increase due to fuel surcharge and tons guaranteed; Option 2 is the informal quote price without fuel surcharge and tons are not guaranteed and subject to availability. *Stefan Golec made the motion that the Selectboard approve Option 1 for salt submitted by Cargill at \$85.13/ton. Motion was seconded by Peter Golec. Motion passed.*
- Stearns stated that he had received a call earlier today from Charles Goulet of Reed & Reed, the contractor who will be receiving the bid for the bridge reconstruction on I-91 over the Williams River. VTrans is requiring some form of documentation verifying that Reed & Reed has made an arrangement with the Town for the use of Golden Hill Road. The project is anticipated to last 2 ½ years and the road will be returned to as good as or better than it is today. Reed & Reed will also be responsible for maintenance and the Town will draft an agreement with stipulations that are required. This verification is due by Monday. *Peter Golec made the motion to authorize the Municipal Manager to sign an agreement with Reed & Reed for use of Golden Hill Road after review of town counsel. Motion was seconded by Joshua Hearne. Motion passed.*
- Stearns noted that his contract requires approval of the Selectboard & Trustees for any outside business opportunities. Stearns noted that he has received an offer for a temporary consulting job for another municipality that will be undergoing a conversion to NEMRC and will not interfere with his duties in Rockingham/Bellows Falls. *Joshua Hearne made the motion to approve the request of the Municipal Manager for temporary outside consulting. Motion was seconded by Peter Golec. Motion passed.*

Approve Minutes of June 3 & 14, 2016: *Peter Golec made the motion to approve the minutes of June 3 and June 14, 2016 as printed. Motion was seconded by Joshua Hearne. Motion passed.*

Public Comment on Items Not on the Agenda (3 minutes per person):

- James Mitchell stated he felt the settlement reached with SMP Architects on the Library was avoidable. Mitchell also stated that he took offense to people referring to the alley reconstruction between Town Hall & People's United Bank as Jim Mitchell Way.
- Deborah Wright read a section from the Lyman Haye's History of Rockingham regarding work that was done on the railroad tunnel that runs under the Square from April 1862 noting that the work that was done at that time might explain the significant dip in the roadway over the tunnel that was recently filled in.
- Wright noted that this community has a significant housing issue, some in critical need of repair, and asked the Board to consider being pro-active instead of reactive and suggested forming a Committee to assist with identification of issues.
- Bonnie Northup asked the Board if anyone has looked into fixing the Vilas Bridge for pedestrian and bicycle traffic. Barnett stated that this has been looked into and this concept has also been refused by the State of New Hampshire. Barnett also stated that he felt that anything less than complete re-opening of the bridge would be considered a failure.
- Wright noted that she had received an email from Commissioner Victoria Sheehan from NHDOT stating that she was working on a proposal. Peter Golec did note that he received an electronic copy of an engineering report. Stearns had a copy of this report with him noting that it had been sent from former Development Director Walsh and is a condition assessment of the Vilas Bridge done in 2010. The electronic file is large but can be emailed and paper copies available if the Board members would like this.

Manager's Report:

- Stearns noted that residents of Lockwood, Pleasant and King Street should be aware that the water main replacement project on these streets is scheduled to begin July 5 and will last approximately 60 days. Stearns also noted that this is an opportune time for residents to upgrade their water service while the street is dug up but that the cost from the road to their house is their responsibility.
- Stearns noted that he has a response from Ford Panels on the repair of the Recreation building and it will cost approximately \$6,000 to have a structural engineer review the plans and draw up specs. Stearns will get this done and return to the Board with the results.
- The contract with Windham County Humane Society has been renewed at a cost of \$1,500.
- Bids are due June 28 at 10:00 am for the Bridge Street Bridge mill & fill and expects that the same two bidders will be the only ones to submit bids.
- Stearns reminded those who still have delinquent taxes that the deadline to make an agreement is this Friday, June 24 and if no agreement is made the property will be sent to the Town Agent on Monday, June 27.
- Bids for the timber sale in the Town Forest in Grafton are due this Thursday, June 23 at 3:00 pm.

Agenda:

1. Health Order – 38 Green Street: Stearns distributed a memo outlining the process that the Board needs to take to issue a health order. Stearns also noted that the question of ownership of the property has been resolved and noted that Attorney Chris Moore has the documents but has not recorded these yet in the land records and noted that the ownership of the property is not Julia Safer but is Amy Robillard. The intent to file a health order has been drafted and data is still being collected. A specific timeline must be followed and it is possible that a public hearing could be held on July 19 and a decision could be made that night or at the August 2 Selectboard meeting. However, if the owner of record states in writing that she will not respond to the health order then immediate action can be taken. Stephanie Ward, resident of Green Street, noted that she knows of 3 individuals, herself included, who are experiencing upper respiratory issues from most likely mold spores from the debris on this property and feels that this timeline is too long. Ward asked if there was any way to accelerate the process. Barnett stated that the Town has to follow the process. Stearns did state that if a statement that the owner will not comply with the health order is received in writing then this could trigger immediate action. Stearns stated that the constable will deliver the health order to the owner with options including the one to not comply.
  
2. Local Government Support of Grant Applications
  - a) GFCJC – 225 Rockingham Street: Bianca Zaransky, Greater Falls Community Justice Center and Detective Sergeant Shane Harris, Bellows Falls Police Department, were present to request the government support for transitional housing at 225 Rockingham Street. Zaransky stated that there would be 2 beds for furloughed individuals who will be closely monitored. Zaransky also noted that there are approximately 20 such individuals currently residing in the Town of Rockingham. Harris also stated that these individuals would be closely monitored possibly by GPS. DiBernardo asked if these were low level offenders. Zaransky stated that they are all types. *Ann DiBernardo made the motion to approve the letter of support and authorize the Municipal Manager to sign on behalf of the Board. Motion was seconded by Joshua Hearne. Motion passed.*
  
  - b) Town of Rockingham CDBG Application – Chroma Technologies Expansion: Adam Grinold, Executive Director of Brattleboro Development Credit Corporation, was present to discuss this project. Stearns stated that this project involves a large expansion of Chroma in its current location in collaboration with the State of Vermont, VT Yankee funds, Federal & State grants, and Town of Rockingham support. The Town would apply for a \$650,000 grant that will require a match. This match would be in the form of a loan from the Development Fund of \$100,000. A public hearing is being scheduled for July 19 to collect public input. This project would be administered by the Town, BDCC and Stevens & Associates. *Joshua Hearne made the motion that the Board approves the opening of an application for this project and authorize the Municipal Manager to sign the application. Motion was seconded by Peter Golec. Wright asked what Chroma's contribution would be. Grinold stated that this is a \$18 million project and Chroma's contribution would be significant. Wright asked how many jobs would be created.*

Grinold stated that it is anticipated that 20 to 25 jobs would be created over a 5 year period. *Barnett called for a vote on the motion. Motion passed.*

3. Finance Office

- a) Transfer of funds to the Fire Equipment Reserve Fund: Stearns noted that this fund had not received any transfer of funds and has not been utilized since 2008. Stearns is requesting that the Board authorize the transfer of \$57,000 from the General Fund to the Fire Equipment Fund to be used in conjunction with the \$500,000 approved at Town Meeting for the purchase of 2 trucks and the thermal camera that the Board recently approved. *Peter Golec made the motion that the Board authorizes the transfer of \$57,000 from the General Fund to the Fire Equipment Fund for the purchase of the recently approved fire equipment. Motion was seconded by Joshua Hearne. Motion passed.*
- b) Transfer of funds to Highway Equipment Fund: Stearns is also requesting the transfer of \$50,000 from the Highway Fund to the Equipment Fund to be used to either replace the 2004 Chevy 2500 pickup (under \$50,000), or the reduce the amount to borrow on the next scheduled replacement of the 2004 International 6 wheeler anticipated to cost \$165,000. Stearns has received quotes for the 6 wheeler of \$155,000 and \$158,000 with an estimated trade-in of \$23,000. Stearns noted that this is the primary vehicle that plows the Griswold Drive area. Stearns also stated that these funds should be transferred prior to June 30. *Joshua Hearne made the motion to transfer \$50,000 from the Highway Fund to the Equipment Fund. Motion was seconded by Peter Golec. Barnett asked if the Board would prefer to use these funds for repair of sidewalks instead of purchasing more trucks. Stearns stated that should this be the desire of the Board it would have to restrict these funds for this purpose only. Barnett called for a vote on the motion. Motion passed.*

Stearns also noted that the memo included information on the SMP settlement funds and suggests that the Board consider putting these funds toward the indebtedness of this project and request that the Library Trustees cover the balance. No action is needed at this meeting.

4. Selectboard Items

- a) Development Office Discussion: Barnett noted that a memo was included in the Board packets from the Manager which he felt was a good start to a job description for this position. The Board discussed whether to advertise for part-time or full-time position, a job description, community participation, community development director vs. economic development director and involvement with BFADC, BDCC, Chamber of Commerce and Windham Regional Development. After discussion it was decided to hold a public discussion of the development office at the next Selectboard meeting.

b) Board Goals: Barnett asked each Board member to read their goals:

Stefan Golec:

- Job Creation & Economic Development and support development of the Island and Industrial Park.
- Affordable Property Taxes with Responsible & Balanced Budgets
- Sidewalk & Street Light improvements
- Continued discussion and attention to Vilas Bridge
- Housing help with down payment program for eligible buyers

Ann DiBernardo

- Community Development with public input
- Vilas Bridge – possible alternative bridge of flowers
- Infrastructure
- Overtime & Comp Time
- Fire & Equipment 5 year plan
- Better communication with public (short-term goal)

Joshua Hearne

- Economic Development in Village & Island with use of Robbie Paper site and Waypoint Center site
- Repair of Depot Street Bridge, Bridge Street Bridge & reopening of Vilas Bridge
- Repair of sidewalks
- Entrances to Village – blighted buildings

Peter Golec

- Development & Job Creation
- Infrastructure – sidewalks & streets
- Budget & Taxes
- Reserve Funds

Hearne stated that while he is concerned about the limited funds the Town has for paving, he would like to commend the Manager on the coordination between the Village water projects and State paving on Route 5, the rebuilding of Rockingham Street ahead of schedule. Hearne did note that there are some areas – Griswold Drive, Prospect Street, Brown Street, Gove Street – are in tough shape, but at least the thoroughfares leading to them have come along and it is hoped to get to those streets as well. Stefan Golec agreed but also noted that sidewalks are in bad shape. Peter Golec stated that the improvements need to start where there is the most foot traffic and should concentrate on the walkability areas that are used the most.

Lamont Barnett

- Reopen the Vilas Bridge
- Redevelopment of the Island & Industrial Park expansion
- Down payment assistance program for home buyers in Rockingham
- Infrastructure improvement – sidewalks mostly

After discussion the Board prioritized its goals as follows:

- Reopening of Vilas Bridge
- Island Development, Industrial Park expansion & attention to TLR
- Infrastructure with emphasis on sidewalks
- Down payment assistance program for home buyers

The short term goal would be the Development Office restructuring.

Stearns stated that while some of these goals were attainable, those that the Board cannot or does not control were not. We do not own the Vilas Bridge or the Island. However, goals of sidewalk repair or road paving are goals that can be accomplished. Stearns stated for example, the portion of the road from just south of Windham Antiques through the Square to Westminster Street is in bad need of repair.

Hearne stated he would agree and suggested that the paving of the Square be moved to #3 on the list.

Stearns also noted that the Route 103 gravel pit is another area that we own and is a valuable asset for redevelopment and it is his recommendation that the Board hang onto this and not lease this out.

Barnett noted that a memo was received from the Manager with suggested goals as follows:

Short term:

- Create a clear procedure with the BFVC Trustees for the review of the manager and the setting of board goals.
- Rebuild the moral of the employees who are your front line.
- Prepare thoughts for Union Negotiations to begin again.
- Reconsider locking any of the Route 103 Gravel Pit in a lease for years to come.
- Review and update the Animal Control Ordinance so it has teeth!
- Determine other policies or ordinances that should be revised or abolished.

Long term:

- Establish criteria for infrastructure priorities (sidewalks, streets, bridges, culverts, buildings, elevators, windows, doors, roofs, HVAC, intrusion/fire/sprinkler alarms, etc.)
- Remain flexible to alter plans as opportunities to coordinate infrastructure improvements with BFVC Water and Wastewater Activities arise. (Town Plan)
- Maintain the schedule for Highway Equipment Replacement.
- Maintain the schedule for Fire Equipment Replacement.
- Build and maintain regional relationships for shared resources and opportunities

c) Summer Schedule – 1 meeting July & August (1<sup>st</sup> Tuesday): Summer schedule will be for just August (August 2)

Review Overtime & Comp Time Report: No comments

Review Agenda Items for Next Meeting – July 7, 2016 Special Meeting: Meeting changed from July 5 regular meeting to July 7 special meeting to accommodate receipt of the Town Plan. Also on the agenda will be Development Office Public Discussion and Highway Equipment Replacement.

Review Agenda Items for Joint Board Meeting - August 30, 2016: 2<sup>nd</sup> Public Hearing for Town Plan.

Review & Approve Orders, Bills & Warrants: *Peter Golec made the motion to approve the orders, bills and warrants as presented. Motion was seconded by Joshua Hearne. Motion passed.*

Other Business:

- DiBernardo stated that there was some confusion last weekend with Jamaican Jewelz and the parking permit and vendor permit and a meeting has been scheduled with Julian Johnson, the Municipal Manager and DiBernardo. Stearns noted that there is a resolution on file giving the Alumni Association & the Chamber of Commerce the authority to issue vendor permits for their respective weekends. It was also noted that the vendor permit that they have is for the hours of 8:00 am to 5:00 pm.
- Hearne stated that he was fortunate to be part of the excellent Alumni weekend and there was great attendance at the Waypoint Center for the Alumni Dance.
- Barnett stated that there was an article recently in The Commons targeting both he and Louise Luring and felt that The Commons owes Mrs. Luring an apology.

Executive Session: No executive session was necessary.

Adjourn: *Peter Golec made the motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:15 p.m. Motion was seconded by Joshua Hearne. Motion passed.*

Attest: \_\_\_\_\_  
Kerry Bennett, Recording Clerk